

Spring & Summer 2014



# BELLEVUE UTILITIES

● Summer Water-Saving Tips ● Replacing Water Meters ● The New Bellevue App ● Handy Phone Numbers

## Become a Leak Detective and Save \$\$



In an average home, 22 gallons of water are lost to leakage each day. If an irrigation line breaks, it can be much more. Unfortunately, many leaks go undetected until a high water bill sends an alert that something is wrong. Learn to be a leak detective and avoid water waste. To determine if you have a leak:

1. Turn off all water in your house. Locate your meter. It's generally located in the ground near the curb in front of the house.
2. Open the lid and use a rag to clear away any debris. If the black or red triangle or silver gear is spinning, and all water has been turned off in your house, you probably have a leak.
3. Another way to check is to turn off all water in your house and record the reading on your meter. Wait 30 minutes without using any water. Check the meter again. If the numbers have changed, you probably have a leak.

### Bellevue's leak adjustment policy

Bellevue employees read your water meter once every two months. If a leak goes undetected during that time, it can add up to thousands of dollars, causing an increase to your water and sewer charges. The city's leak adjustment policy allows one adjustment per property owner for the main water line only, with a written request and proof of repair. We do not make adjustments for leaks to optional devices, such as irrigation systems, pools, water features, or boat docks. By taking the leak detection steps above, you can prevent large bills due to leaks.

## Prevent Dangerous Backflow

Do you own an irrigation system, fire sprinkler system, or lake water pumping system? The City of Bellevue requires that backflow prevention be installed in most of the above situations, in compliance with Washington State law.

What is backflow? It's exactly what it sounds like: the water is flowing in the opposite direction from its normal flow. With the direction of flow reversed, due to a change in pressure, backflow can allow contaminants such as fertilizers, garden chemicals, insects, and pet waste to enter your drinking water system. A backflow prevention assembly ensures water flows only one way. If you have any of the above systems, but did not receive a reminder notice from the city about annual testing, please contact Water Quality at 425-452-5208. Your efforts help protect your drinking water quality!



## At Your Service

A Bellevue Utilities Customer Service Representative is ready to answer your call. She can explain your bill, walk you through steps to detect a leak at your



house, help you set up or cancel service, and assist with many other customer service issues.

Our Customer Service Reps answered over 30,000 calls in 2013. They also performed other duties, such as processing 4,300 moves in Bellevue's service area and 2,000 water meter replacements.

If you need assistance with your bill, a move, or how to detect a leak, call Utilities at 425-452-6973.

# Q&A

**My water bill always goes up once I start watering the lawn and garden. Are there ways to lower it?**



Most people are surprised at how much water they use for summer irrigation. Your bill may also go up because Bellevue has a “tiered” rate structure designed to encourage conservation—the more water you use, the more it costs. Please keep this in mind when watering lawns and

gardens. Take time now to check for leaks (see front page), have your irrigation system tuned up (if you have one), and check hoses and faucets for leaks. You may also want to adopt water-saving practices for landscaping.

See smart watering tips and other gardening information at [www.bellevuewa.gov/smart-watering.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/smart-watering.htm)

## City of Bellevue Utilities

**General Information** 425-452-6932

**Customer Service/Billing** 425-452-6973

**Drinking Water Quality** 425-452-6192

**Utilities Maintenance & 24 Hour Emergencies** 425-452-7840  
(flooding/water main breaks/no water/sewer overflows/  
pollutant spills/hazardous road conditions)

**Email:** [Utilities@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:Utilities@bellevuewa.gov)

**Web:** [www.bellevuewa.gov/utilities.htm](http://www.bellevuewa.gov/utilities.htm)

### Non-city phone numbers:

**Republic Services (Allied Waste)** 425-452-4762

**Puget Sound Energy** 1-888-225-5773

## Replacing Water Meters – Yours Could be Next



As part of regular maintenance and to keep our infrastructure in top shape, Bellevue Utilities replaces about 2,000 water meters each year based on age and condition. Most water meters need to be replaced after 10-15 years. Your water meter may be due for replacement this year.

### Here are some things you need to know:

- City of Bellevue maintenance crews will be wearing city logo clothing and are required to carry ID badges. They will be driving clearly marked city vehicles. Feel free to ask to see their badge.
- Work will occur Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Crews do not need to enter your home to replace a water meter, and you do not need to be home. An appointment isn't necessary.
- Crews will knock on your door to let you know they will be shutting off your water while they do the work. If no one answers, they will continue to do their work.
- The water supply to your home will be disrupted for about 10-15 minutes. If crews see a meter with a dial spinning (indicating water is being used), but no one answers the door, they will come back at another time. (An appliance could be running or someone could be in the shower.)
- After the work is done, you may experience some air in the pipes. This goes away easily by running cold water for several minutes.
- If you have questions, please call Utilities Operations and Maintenance at 425-452-7840.